

US 93 Polson Corridor Study



Needs and Objectives

Prepared For:

City of Polson

Lake County

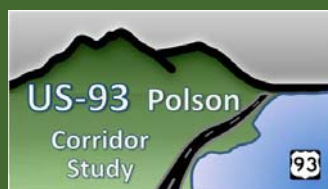
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Chapter 4 Needs and Objectives

US 93 is a major north/south highway providing a vital regional link between Idaho and Canada, and is functionally classified as a Rural Principal Arterial on the NHS Non-Interstate System. This corridor also provides an important link between Missoula, Kalispell, and surrounding communities. In the corridor study area, US 93 sees a diverse mix of traffic - including trucks, recreational vehicles, passenger vehicles and non-motorized uses. During the peak summer tourism season traffic volumes elevate in numbers causing congestion and poor levels of service on the roadway and adjacent intersections. The needs and objectives listed below addresses both MDT's concerns to enhance traffic flow and the local government's desire to enhance livability and connectivity within their community.

Note the needs or objectives followed by an asterisk implies a variation on the needs or objectives contained in the 1995 FEIS fully referenced in Section 4.2 References at the end of this chapter.

4.1 Needs and Objectives:

4.1.1 Need Number 1: System Linkage and Function

Preserve functionality of US 93 as a principal arterial.

Objectives

- Maintain connections of Polson with other Montana communities.
- Maintain connections to other major highways in the corridor.

4.1.2 Need Number 2: Transportation Demand and Operations

Accommodate existing and future transportation demand on US 93 through the planning horizon of the year 2030.

Objectives

- Maintain a level of service (LOS) B or better for roadway segments along US 93 (rural principal arterial), to the extent practicable. *
- Maintain a level of service (LOS) C or better for roadway segments along US 93 (urban principal arterial), to the extent practicable. *
- Acknowledge the increase in non-motorized transportation uses and provide for appropriate infrastructure, to the extent practicable.

4.1.3 Need Number 3: Roadway Geometrics

Provide a facility that accommodates the diversity of vehicle types.

Objectives

- Provide appropriate lane configuration(s) to accommodate the vehicle demand expected under existing and future conditions, to the extent practicable.
- Provide for unique turning movements and grade requirements for specialized vehicles such as semi-trucks and recreational vehicles, to the extent practicable.
- Improve the road and bridge surfacing widths to meet current MDT design criteria, to the extent practicable.
- Provide modifications to the roadway horizontal alignment and vertical alignment to meet current MDT design criteria, to the extent practicable.

4.1.4 Need Number 4: Safety

Improve the safety of US 93. *

Objectives

- Provide adequate clear zones along US 93 by identifying and removing obstacles, upgrading shoulder widths, and providing urban roadway features in accordance with MDT design criteria, to the extent practicable.
- Manage public access points and private approaches by providing appropriate features commensurate with the types and volumes of traffic encountered at each approach, and/or by consolidating or closing approaches, to the extent practicable.

4.1.5 Need Number 5: Livability and Connectivity

Reduce conflicts by enhancing connectivity and minimizing impacts within the US 93 corridor.

Objectives

- Minimize impacts to existing neighborhoods. *
- Minimize impacts to environmental, sensitive and recreational resources, including trails. *
- Be responsive to land use plans and future transportation needs. *

4.1.6 Need Number 6: Truck Traffic

Minimize the impacts of US 93 thru truck traffic.

Objectives

- Provide appropriate signage to direct thru truck traffic.
- Minimize the number of vertical grade changes for thru truck traffic.
- Provide acceptable travel times with minimal delay for thru truck traffic.

4.1.7 Other

The following are potential objectives that do not correlate to any of the five needs described above.

- Be responsive to long-term maintenance requirements. *
- Limit construction disruption as much as possible. *
- Community preference.

4.2 References

Carter Burgess/WGM Group Inc., *F 5-1(9)6, U.S. Highway 93 Evaro – Polson Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation*, June, 1996

Carter Burgess/WGM Group Inc., *US Highway 93 – Polson, Traffic Operations and Environmental Study*, March, 1995

Northwest Environmental Training Center, *Writing the Perfect EA/FONSI or EIS Training Course Publication*, September 3-4, 2008